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OBSERVATIONS

ON THE

POPERY LAWS.

Vultis exemplo majorum augere rem Romanam, *viētos in Civitatem accipiendo*? Materia crescendi per summam gloriam suppeditat. Certè id firmissimum longè imperium est, *quò obedientes guadent*. Nostrum enim fuit efficere, ut omnium rerum vobis ad Consulendum *poteslas esset*; vestrum est decernere, *quod optimum vobis rei que publicæ sit*.

L I V.



D U B L I N :

PRINTED BY T. EWING IN CAPEL-STREET.

M. D C C. L X X I.

[P R I C E, a British Sixpence.]

AC 911. 1771. C86

T O

H I S E X C E L L E N C Y

GEORGE Lord Vis. TOWNSHEND:

LORD LIEUTENANT GENERAL AND GENERAL
GOVERNOR OF IRELAND.

A N D T O T H E

LORDS SPIRITUAL AND TEMPORAL,

A N D

C O M M O N S,

IN PARLIAMENT ASSEMBLED.

T H E S E

O B S E R V A T I O N S

ARE, WITH THE PROFOUNDDEST SUBMISSION AND RESPECT

D E D I C A T E D

B Y T H E

A U T H O R.

OBSERVATIONS

O N T H E

POPERY LAWS.

IN every Constitution, political, as well as natural, there are original springs and principles by which the œconomy of the whole is conducted : some communicate vigour, and promise longevity ; others, seemingly performing the functions, and occasionally promoting the purposes of life, tend ultimately to its dissolution. They are the several components of a complicated machine, acting and acted upon alternately ; now co-operating, now counter-working, as events favour, or accidents affect their several powers. Hence therefore, the great strength of attention, and the great exertion of skill, necessary to produce all the Good, and remedy every Evil which such a Constitution is capable of admitting. This is properly the province of the Legislature in every Country ; and particularly in our own, where power becomes either a remote, or an immediate delegation from the people, this task of managing the springs, or correcting the deviations of the ma-

chine of Government, will be the more difficult. A free people must be humoured in the habits, and governed by the principles, good and bad, to which they have been long accustomed; and changes even for the better should be cautiously made, without giving any violent shock to their prejudices. In some cases, certain disorders must be left to themselves, to work off noxious humours: it being more prudent to take their cure from the hand of time, than to precipitate remedies which never operate profitably, when they are administered unseasonably. In more hopeful cases, however, this work of time may be safely anticipated; and *when it can*, hesitation would be imprudent, and delay pernicious. The lingering disease may fatigue, the growing hectic may alarm, the patient: and a *new* remedy will be adopted the sooner, that the *old* contributed but little to the relief, and still less to the recruit of nature, in any stage of the disorder.

To apply these general observations to our own case, it should be noticed, that after the reduction of the old Irish natives, on the commencement of the seventeenth century, our Constitution, then in its infancy, exhibited uncommon marks of vigour. That after suffering violent convulsions in the time of Charles I; it soon recovered new strength, and from a promising state of youth immediately after the Restoration of Charles II, it arrived by quick approaches to maturity in the reign of William the third.

It should be remembered also, that soon after the demise of that great Monarch, this blooming face on our affairs was overcast; a cloud rested upon it, thin in the beginning, but thickened by time. It came on gradually, and was submitted to as a *transient* inconvenience, which speculative zeal imagined, would be repaid by *lasting* future advantages. It consequently gave no alarm; and the slight put upon it was the greater, as it fell only on the weaker part of the nation: the labouring and more numerous, but at the same time the most odious of any, who professed a religion different from that of the establishment. We waited a long time for the expected benefit, but it did not arrive; our languor encreased, and for some years past it very naturally made its progress backward, from the inferior people, to the community in general; other causes concurred of late in this retrograde progress, till (notwithstanding all the vigour of the administration) it began to affect those members, who from their situation in life, are the farthest removed from public distress of any kind. The cause I have mentioned is a capital one, and in perpetual operation. Happily perhaps, for us, it can be easily removed if ever we set about it, or think ourselves safe in doing so; it was laid in angry times, and in the fears of our ancestors that great evils impended over this nation from men recently disarmed, and who having lost the *power* of injuring us, yet retained the *inclination*. However

just those fears might be, they should not, certainly, extend to any legal disqualification on any set of men, to render us *durable* service; since their disability to such service must undoubtedly involve a *durable* evil: and since any strength gained by *them* must be so much acquisition in our favour, to be turned *against them* on an emergency. Our real strength must arise from the soundness of our Constitution, and from the circulation of its benefits. Should the principal of those benefits be forbid to the greater part of our labouring people, to the landholder, to the citizen, and to the yeoman; the hand of industry is *actually* and *effectually* cramped, from no necessity on earth; but what is imposed by our thinking that such men hold principles to which themselves seem to be strangers: I mean principles inconsistent with the safety of our *civil* government. I shall prove in the sequel, that what I insinuate is no paradox; history and stubborn facts shall be my guide. We may therefore desist from charging the wiser part among these men with *principles which they abhor*; other Protestant states have done so long since, and take their Catechism (such as it is) from themselves, not from others who would fasten a different one upon them. In fact, honest men enlightened by knowledge, can not profess *two* Religions: one for the public to *deceive* it, another for private conscience to *deceive themselves*. Such men may be orthodox in their civil faith, and when they are, they can not be the objects of any penal

laws, detrimental to the public ; tho' were their numbers but small, the injury could not be great. *As a multitude*, their inconnection, their disability, their laziness, their despondency; their beggary, must not only weaken the whole community, but affect its very vitals. You make them mere birds of passage : and by giving them no encouragement to improve, to drain, or to inclose the lands you let them for a short time, and on rack rents, you prepare them for their flight, and injure yourself greatly. You necessarily import the subsistence of the manufacturer, the artizan, and but too often of the greater part of the people, from distant regions : and resign to foreign agriculture, the stamina of public prosperity !

In truth the little strength gained, the great weakness incurred by the indiscriminate operation of our penal laws, call aloud for alteratives ; nor should disgust to a *new* remedy, nor diffidence in the hand that offers it, nor fondness for an *old* prescription, ineffectual for seventy years past, prevail against a *probable*, or even *possible* change for the better ; such especially as can be attended neither with danger or hazard, and from whose operation some useful knowledge must certainly be gained of the *weak* foundation or *real* solidity of our former judgments. Such an advantage is not to be lightly thrown away. A retrospect to *causes* which perhaps we mistook, and to *consequences* which we have long felt, may put a clue into our hands for guiding us to useful truths

thro' the labyrinth of opinion, in which we have wandered but too long. It may also help to a solution of some questions very important to our true interests, in this happy repose for such an examination : In the first place, whether measures expedient in certain circumstances, might not be highly injurious to public prosperity, when such circumstances no longer exist, nor can possibly return ? Whether ill information had any share in disposing of our former determinations, relatively to the distribution of rewards and punishments ? And lastly, whether a succession of facts has *contradicted* or *justified* our judgments of men and things, since our deviation from the plan of policy established by K. WILLIAM III. for the prosperity of this kingdom ?

The means of happiness to any country are two-fold : drawn on the *one* hand from its *natural* advantages, on the *other* from the wisdom of its *political institutions* ; *either* may lay the foundation, nothing but the union and co-operation of *both* can erect the edifice of public prosperity. On such a rock ours has been built by the late King William, and if we have removed any of the pillars which supported that edifice, it is time, *in this day of leisure for it*, to replace them. That the present administration will lend a helping hand, we have no reason to doubt ; as indeed we have had repeated proofs of the best disposition towards this nation in every act of executive government, since the succession of the present

Royal Family took place. The natural advantages of this island are spread before us, not only with a liberal, but profuse hand. Surrounded on all sides with the most fruitful coasts ; possessed of the safest harbours ; happy in a moderate climate ; happier still in the fecundity of our soil ; peculiarly advantaged by our situation between the old and new world. These are the bounties of Providence to this nation. *On the other hand*, our civil constitution settled on unshaken foundations soon after the Revolution in *eighty eight* ; all party contentions about power, long since at an end. Property ascertained by *old laws*, guarded by *old prescription*, fortified by *every legal sanction* ; frequent sessions of the legislature thro' a period of eighty years, *uninterrupted from foreign hostility or domestic rebellion*. A new improvement of the constitution by more frequent elections of our representatives in parliament ; all parties revering the present establishment ; united in loyalty to the same prince ; steady in obedience to the same laws. These are the provisions which an excellent constitution, strengthened by length of time, has made for improving the advantages which our soil and situation intitle us to : and though all this be undeniably a fair representation, as far as I have deduced it ; yet I am sensible how readily it might be rejected by a stranger of any curiosity, who should take a survey in person, of the present face of nature, and of the condition of the people in this island. To what

has been so truly advanced in our favour, he would oppose facts equally undeniable ; the miserable appearance of the country after this repose of eighty years, our fields uncultivated, our wastes unreclaimed, our labouring people destitute of food and raiment ; our roads and villages infested by vagrant beggars ; in *many* parts houses abandoned : in *most*, no houses built, no improvements made. Numbers of our manufacturers yearly on the wing : others with what monied property they can acquire, flying for security to foreign lands : still greater numbers, under the compulsion of *invincible distress*, turning exiles in their own defence ; and to complete all, public credit at the lowest ebb, and bankruptcies in every quarter of the kingdom ! All this, such a traveller would oppose to the representation given above, and he would have no hesitation in pronouncing, that *in a country so highly favoured by nature*, the inhabitants could not be miserable, *without some defect in our laws*.

Whether any laws enacted within the present century, and still in force, are defective, or operated differently from the intention of the legislature, may be well worthy of consideration. I enter into such a disquisition, with all the deference due to the wisdom of our representatives, and with some confidence, as I apply to men who cannot be deceived by mine, or any other writer's mistakes, relatively to the good of their country ; but who, however, may want to be

reminded, rather than informed, of the truths I unfold. To such men, enlightened by knowledge, and instructed by experience, such an application as the present, should properly be made, as it must be *from them*, and *them alone*, that a redress of our present grievances can be obtained. I am also the more emboldened to offer the following hints, as most of the arguments which run through this short tract, have been borrowed from as able men, and as eminent patriots, as the present age has produced.

The capital evils which were thus brought upon us *gradually*, from a *tolerable* to a *weak* state, and from *that* to our present exhausted condition, cannot with justice be imputed to any administration; and he who would charge them on the *present*, must have but a poor alternative in his choice, between his real or pretended ignorance: they have arisen chiefly from two *principal* sources; from our *wealthy* Gentry who desert this country, and from our *wasting* and *wasted* Papists, who remain in it; from those who eat their bread in foreign lands, and those who oblige us to eat the bread of foreign soils here at home; in a word, from those who have *great landed property* in this island, and those who have *none*, except a precarious one, limited in duration, and circumscribed in profit. Under such a waste from foreign and domestic causes, this nation cannot thrive, but must be undone inevitably, unless some speedy remedy is applied. One part of the subject is so

fully handled by an eminent lawyer, in his new
 * LIST OF ABSENTEES, and in his observations on the state of our commerce and manufactures in 1769, that nothing can be added to enforce his argument. To the *second*, I shall endeavour to speak with inferior abilities, yet with the *partiality* due to the good of my country, with the *impartiality* also due to truth, and with the *deference* due to the experience of all free nations. On such ground I run no hazard in meeting the good sense of men, too well guarded to be entangled in the snares of controversy, too knowing not to reject ideas repugnant to the interest of their country, and too wise not to adopt every *practicable* scheme for its advantage.

It is a truth, I believe, universally agreed upon, that the Papists of this kingdom have for seventy years past, been an insuperable obstacle to its prosperity. Cut off from the principal benefits of its free constitution, they *necessarily* become a disease within its bowels; acting *against* it, from an incapacity to act *for* it. We need not hesitate, therefore, in pronouncing them *the worst* kind of subjects, that can exist in a country which subsists *chiefly* by *commerce* and *useful arts*. The possibility of rendering them *useful* subjects, which with some may still be a great question, was *none* to the late King WILLIAM, who proved his theory by his practice, and recommended *both*

* Dub. printed by G. Faulkner, 1769.

by his success. He was a prince of great knowledge, as well as experience, and his authority should have great weight in deciding on so important a point as this before us, wherein the *co-operation* or *inactivity* of a million of people is concerned. He hated popery, no doubt, as far as a prince of his enlarged principles could hate any religion ; but he drove not his popish subjects into a state of *political apathy*, much less into a state of *despondency* and *inconnexion*. *He proportioned civil punishment, to the extent and reality of the civil crime*, and having divested the religious dissenters, most hateful to his people, of any power *to injure* the new establishment, *he stopped there*, and divested them of none *to strengthen it*. It was a strain of wisdom he learned in his native country ; a policy which operated invariably in *Holland*, since a period was put to the silly religious disputes which cost the virtuous *Barneveldt* his life, and drove *Grotius*, the glory of that country, into exile.

King *William* it is well known, was obliged to pursue some measures disagreeable to him ; His indulgence to the Irish Papists *was not of the number* ; the affection which they bore to the only monarch of the *Stuart race*, who could be said to favour them, produced very naturally their *aversion* to him. They opposed him in arms, and they yielded *reluctantly* to his government. In the measure which followed, we find the vast difference between the severity of *spiritual animos-*

city, and the mild chastisement of *political justice*. That monarch was not content with conquering those rebellious subjects in the field; he soon after conquered *their passions*. Instead of *meeting* the oppression they *feared*, they *found* the protection they *wanted*. He only stripped them of what they were no way intitled to, civil and military preferments. He did not strip them of *property*, but confirmed it to them in the fullest extent, with the power of acquiring more, *uncircumscribed by psualties, unimpeached by mercenary informers*. Whatever honest industry could *procure*, they were legally qualified to *realize*. Their condition was happy, *because it was bounded by security*; the condition of their Protestant brethren was still more happy, *because legislation, with every power civil, military and ecclesiastical, was put into their hands*. On such foundations, as on a rock of adamant, did King *William* establish the constitution; fortifying the power of the state; securing the natural rights of individuals! The Papists, like their brethren in *Holland*, co-operated *with* the public, and *for* the public, in their subordinate condition. They were instrumental in national prosperity, instead of being a heavy burthen *on it*; and they discharged a religious, as well as civil duty to government, *fortified on all sides by the ties of interest*.

Such, I say, was the political constitution established in this country by *K. William*. Why it was departed from immediately after that mo-

narch's demise, and without the smallest provocation on the side of the Papists of those days, may seem unaccountable ; that it was done on principles of sound policy, may with good reason be doubted, as the Protestant interest in this island was gaining strength every day, and *could acquire none*, most certainly, from a perpetuity of pains and penalties on any religious Dissenters, whose interests were *on the side of the civil constitution*, and whose conduct must, in the general course of things, be under *the direction of those interests*. Popery proscribed by law, hated by the public, depressed by its own weakness, could injure public prosperity in *no* degree, commensurate with disability on its votaries, to enjoy durable property in land, or a secure property *even in money*. It should seem therefore, that *Q. Anne's* penal laws, had their source, not so much in the fear of a remote and possible danger, as in the resentment of former injuries, when Protestants and Papists (the two great parties on our stage) contended about the mighty stake of power and property. However natural our fears may be, or however just our resentments ; yet *neither* should hurry us out of the line of our true interests. Resentment in public, as well as private life, is often necessary and justifiable. Degenerated into revenge, it becomes hurtful, by overacting its part, and may wound the hand that strikes, more than the patient who yields to the blow. That too much was allowed to this principle in our

own, as well as in other countries, cannot be denied. It rankled, very naturally, in the breasts of numbers soon after the late Revolution was completed; and it operated with so much animosity from the pulpit and press, that K. *William* was obliged to interpose his authority; to silence the clamours raised against the *articles of Limeric*, before he had time to get those articles ratified in parliament. And it must be acknowledged to their honour, that some patriots, the most distinguished by their fortune and political abilities, exerted a laudable emulation of the King's good sense and equity, on that occasion. But fatally for this nation, that great monarch's reign was short. The fires he covered, and endeavoured to extinguish, were soon kindled. The principle I have mentioned, collected fuel in abundance, and the hereditary zeal of his immediate successor (the last of the STUARTS) fanned these fires into a flame, which without being wasted itself, has wasted every thing that came in its way, ever since.

We ought, undoubtedly, to persist in every wise measure of our ancestors; but we have no call, nor the least prospect of a call upon us, to espouse their passions, or adopt their maxims, relatively to the distribution of rewards and punishments. Their passions had objects that do not now exist; their maxims arose from the combination of both; and *all*, were the consequence of recent injuries received from the partizans of the

late King *James*, and of the efforts of *France* to re-establish that ill-advised prince. In a word, their fears were, in a great degree, justifiable from the dangers which threatened them from *abroad*, and from a diffidence of those *at home*, who were recently subdued to the established government. During his short reign, King *William* kept those passions within proper bounds, as he was every day setting bounds to the object which excited them. But that Monarch died; and the combustible matter remained, getting great accession of strength from the claims of a Pretender to the throne, acknowledged by *France*, and supported by her power. These were the incitements to the penal laws against Papists on the commencement of *Q. Anne's* reign. These objects of penal laws are all removed: in effect, we have no Pretender to the throne at present. *France* is weakened, and agitated with internal distempers: and, in truth, had those dangers, which threatened our ancestors, existed to this day, they should be far from being a motive to lay the profitable industry, of *any* part of our people, under discouragements.

The security of any country, divided by religious systems, may be rendered *effectual*, by a legal toleration of all sects, and by a T E S T of fidelity to the civil government *from each*. To the present Bishop of *Glocester's* admirable reasonings on this head, nothing can be added, nor can any thing be objected, save only, the gratuitous posi-

tion, that *Papists cannot be bound by any oath of allegiance to a Protestant government*. King *William* thought otherwise, and the experience of our neighbours the *Dutch*, for near a hundred and fifty years past, may enable us to drop so groundless an opinion, for it is no more. Even our own history affords abundant proofs of the resistance of *Papists* to papal dispensations, notwithstanding the operation and severity of Queen *Elizabeth's* penal laws, to tempt them out of their allegiance. On this principle many of the old *Irish* clans, and many of the popish nobility of *English* race, fought on the Queen's side in the *Tyrone Rebellion*; and in *England*, when the nation was threatened with destruction, from *Philip* the second's invincible Armada; "some gentlemen of that sect, (according to the profound historian * *Mr. Hume*) "conscious that they could not expect any trust "or authority, entered themselves volunteers in "the fleet and army; some equipped ships at "their own charge, and gave the command of "them to Protestants: others were active in "animating their tenants and vassals and neighbours to the defence of their country. Such "was the loyalty of *English Papists* to a Protestant Queen, and such their resistance to a Pope, "who (according to the same excellent writer) "fulminated a Bull of excommunication against "her, had deposed her from the throne, and had

* History of England under the House of Tudor. Vol. 3. Dub. Edit. p. 200, 201.

“ absolved her subjects from their oaths of allegiance.”

In truth, there is not a Protestant state on the Continent of *Europe*, that will not furnish us with proofs of our mistakes on the question before us. In the King of *Prussia's* dominions, Papists take oaths of allegiance to that monarch ; no more is required to ensure their fidelity ; and they are believed sincere, because their steady loyalty for more than a hundred years past, is a proof of their sincerity. When the armies of *France* took possession by force, of his late Majesty's Electoral dominions, his Popish subjects were as faithful to him as any other, and furnished a recent proof, that perjury to a Protestant prince, was no principle of their religion. Late as it is, let us, before it is too late, shake off the fetters forged for us, not by religion, but by the memory of former animosities about power, in which religion bore only a *subservient* and *secondary* part. Let us not deceive ourselves, by arguments drawn from the rebellions of Papists formerly in this kingdom. For three hundred years before the Reformation, such rebellions were more frequent against a *Popish* government, than since that period against a *Protestant* government. They were evils arising perpetually from causes which do not exist at present, and indeed can never exist again ; from circumstances, wherein the spirit of a fierce people was *irritated* against lawful authority, instead of being *won to it*, by any composition with their *manners*, or any prudent concessions to their *prejudices*.

Political deviations must be common, where the lines of protection and obedience are but ill marked. The case is now altered: we know with precision, what road we are to take, and how far we are to go. The measures of obedience are well ascertained, and every subject, Papist and Protestant, enjoys the protection due to him by law: but whether every Papist enjoys the immunities due to the public interest, and due to his merit also, is another question; tho' it should be none, had we an assurance, that the old disease is cured, *or that the sharp remedy is operating without an object.* To speak without figure, the *reason* of every human law should be tried by its *utility*; and whenever that ceases, *the benefit* (according to * Judge *Lyttleton*, and to truth) *ceases also.*

The benefits attending a TOLERATION, and TEST of civil fidelity, will not be controverted, tho' the utility of overcharging such a Test may; for doubtless, the propositions in any Test, *ought not to go beyond their object.* For seventy years past we have proposed legal tests to Papists, which the majority among them have refused obstinately, notwithstanding the great benefits annexed to their acceptance of such tests; and tho' their refusal may be no proof of *the soundness of their understanding*, yet it is one, certainly, of *their sincerity.* It is a proof also, that if they did not believe the

* *Cessante ratione legis, cessat beneficium legis.* Synopsis of Lord Coke's Commentaries upon Lyttleton, p. 95.

obligation of an oath *to be sacred*, they would not scruple giving us *duplicity* and *hypocrisy* in exchange, for all the advantages of our free constitution. The metaphysics of any *established* religion, should never be imposed upon dissenters *from it*; because *civil* government being concerned only about their *civil* fidelity, a test drawn from the principles of the religion they profess, is *the most proper for them*, indeed no other can be proper. Should Irish Papists, for instance, swear “ all
 “ civil obedience to be due only to his pre-
 “ sent Majesty ; renounce the Pope’s supremacy
 “ in Temporals, declare their conviction of the
 “ incompetence of that Bishop, to decide about
 “ the civil affairs of any foreign state ; that he
 “ hath no power to dissolve the allegiance due to
 “ princes, or to dispense with any obligatory
 “ oath to government,” &c. Should their religion, I say, intitle them to give us such a test, no doubt; certainly, can be entertained of their *civil orthodoxy*. On the *other* hand, should any Papist refuse giving that test, *a discovery would immediately be made of his professing a religion incompatible with the security of our civil government*: and his recusancy would justify every legal severity against him. Men of such unconstitutional principles would, like buoys on the flood, point out our danger, instead of leaving us under *any suspense*, as at present, *about its reality*. Again, should the *greater* number of such subjects, like their brethren in *Hanover* and *Holland*, comply with so

neceſſary a *teſt*, we ſhould *in that caſe*, be in poſſeſſion of a mighty advantage, *by having a line of ſeparation drawn between our friends and enemies*. We ſhould know with precision, the meaſure to be purſued in the juſt diſpenſation of rewards and puniſhments, inſtead of *confounding theſe men indifcriminately*, as an incorrigible multitude, with whom no compoſition can be made, for the proſperity of this country.

Should, indeed, any ſuch ſound members be found (and they are worth ſeeking for) it would ſeem, that they merit ſome manumiffion, after this *long quarantine* of political health, ſince the demife of King *William*; and ſhould any gentleman object, that their good conduct, ſince the promulgation of Queen *Anne's* penal laws, was rather the tribute of fear to power, than the diſcharge of a duty, which the Goſpel requires to every government, ſuch a gentleman has my conſent, as, I truſt, I ſhall have *his*, to differ a little from him, and on ſurer ground. Indeed either principle might have its ſhare, in producing ſo good an effect, and it may be hoped, that the better principle, had the greateſt. *Inability to evil* is doubtleſs one of the ſtrongeſt ſanctions of government; but *inability to good*, forms a great weakneſs on its ſide. “ Penal laws (ſays the Baron *Monteſquieu*,) have ever an activity *to deſtroy*,” and they do it effectually, when the hand of induſtry is bound up by legal interdicts. They ſhould not affect *guiltleſs men*: much leſs the

whole community, thro' their operation on individuals. Administered in too strong a dose, they frustrate their own ends, and may create a *new* disease, without curing the *old*.

The old disease of this nation has been so accurately delineated by a distinguished * Writer, supposed to be a member of our own House of Commons, that I cannot resist the pleasure of giving in his own words, the substance of what I have taken in detail. “ Ireland is an island which may
 “ certainly boast of natural advantages, but they
 “ have hitherto been unimproved, or unemployed ;
 “ with fine harbours, but little commerce, and a
 “ fruitful soil but little assisted as yet by cultivation.
 “ It contains about eleven millions of Irish plan-
 “ tation acres, not above two thirds of which
 “ are inhabited, and not one half under any rea-
 “ sonable degree of cultivation, which is evident
 “ from its never yet having been able to produce
 “ Corn, nearly equal to the consumption of a
 “ country, which has the fewest inhabitants,
 “ and those a people too, who consume less than
 “ any people perhaps in the world ; † taxed in a
 “ greater degree than *Britain*, with a great ma-
 “ jority of its inhabitants too miserable from their
 “ poverty, to contribute to the supplies, and

* See considerations on the dependencies of Great Britain. London printed for J. Almon ; and Dub. by J. Williams, 1769.

† See this fully proved in the excellent pamphlet from whence I take this quotation.

“ above two thirds debarred by *religious* policy,
 “ from almost every opportunity of contributing
 “ to the wealth or strength of the country ; who
 “ because they are not supposed to be attached to
 “ the government *by principle*, are not to be bound
 “ to it *by interest* ; and by the evil construction
 “ of well designed laws, are not suffered to de-
 “ posit with the State even *hostages for their loyalty*.
 “ Who are not allowed either incitements to in-
 “ dustry, or pledges of fidelity ; by being pre-
 “ cluded from enjoying security for their money,
 “ or any valuable possession in their Land. Who
 “ are kept by the Laws in a state of preparation
 “ for revolt, without hazard, attachment, or ob-
 “ ligation to restrain them ; in short without any
 “ interest in the public preservation.” Such is
 the delineation of this internal disease of Popery,
 sketched out by a masterly hand. We are deeply
 interested in its cure, and should it admit of
 none in this Protestant country, and *in this alone*,
 we may safely denominate it a self-generated
 monster : the like of which, never appeared be-
 fore, in the political sky !

Nil oriturum aliàs, nil ortum tale fatemur !

To be a little more serious ; the insecurity
 mentioned by this able writer, relating to land
 and money, in a trading country is easier to be
 accounted for, than justified by any principle of
 sound policy. A monied property, as life itself
 (rising and setting in weakness) is of a transient

nature, and if not carefully tended, it will fly from us, when the loss may be most fatal, and least expected. Both must find security in the place of their birth, or be forced to find it in some more salutary climate. For the credit of my country, I would willingly draw a veil over a fact, which in this particular distinguishes it from any other civilized nation. With us, there is no security for money lent by Papists, save only, what may be obtained thro' the hazard of personal engagements; easily eluded by family settlements, or annihilated by the mortality of the borrowers. From such a precarious security, instances can be produced, of the ruin of many Popish families in this kingdom. So deep a wound to the livelihood of individuals, as well as to public credit, induced some worthy members of both houses of Parliament, to provide a remedy; and from the time of the late Lord *Halifax's* administration here, to the end of the last Session, Heads of a Bill were from time to time, brought into parliament for that purpose; But so *ODIOUS*, it seems, were the ill-fated people intended to be relieved by that Bill; or so *crooked* did the object itself appear, (like a straight stick between two mediums;) or so slight was the evil, from the *apprehensions of a greater*; that no effort of patriotism, could hitherto obtain the passing such a Bill into a law.

Deeply as the persons concerned in the fate of that Bill, were afflicted with their hard fortune,

thro' so many trials ; yet to join my own sense, to that of several respectable persons, I do not think that its failure was any great disappointment to the public. It was well intended, no doubt, but it seems to have been clogged with so many preventive and defensive clauses, (as if the return of popery should be the consequence of giving expedition to the recovery of a Papist's money) that the security intended, seemed to be frustrated in a good degree, by the several rounds it must take, before it could have its full effect.

Such complicated remedies may have their use in preserving the remains of life ; but they can have very little effect, in restoring the vigour, or improving the complexion of a wasted Constitution. It is not physic we now want, but simple diet and wholesome food ; some cordial to revive us, not emetics to bring on new convulsions, while the old paroxysms come on but too frequently of themselves. We have one set of men to *reclaim*, and another to *reform* : Absentees who drain the nation of its circulating species, and Papists who drain it of its people, and waste its lands. To reclaim the greater part of *the former* will (we hope) be easy to the legislature, or at worst, they must come back and reside among us, when their Tenants are ruined, and when little money can be found for exportation. To reform *the latter*, will not be difficult, when we set about it in earnest ; unincumbered with ideas, which have no foundation, and apprehensions of danger,

which flew before King *William* fourscore years ago, and had no existence *since his time*. The Papists of this country have as little *the will* to injure us, and if we please, may have as much *the power* to serve us, as their brethren in the electorates of *Hanover* and *Brandenburg* have, under their respective Sovereigns.

This *German policy* of uniting all parties in one creed of political faith, gives sufficient security to civil government. If it doth not, I confess, in any great degree prevent the growth of *Papery*, yet it prevents the growth of *inconnexion*, of *laziness*, of *inactivity*, of *despair*, and of *general poverty*. It prevents the waste of lands, and the flight of unemployed labourers and manufacturers; and it prevents the growth of *papery* itself, by giving an exclusion to all its votaries from preferments ecclesiastical or civil. It was the happy policy introduced into this kingdom by King *William*, as I repeated above, and the good conduct it naturally produced among the Papists of *his time*, would not be less operative now, at the end of eighty years, among their great-grand-children.

By the penal laws established here under *Q. Anne*, the Papists were put under a legal interdict, from enjoying any lands whatever (for it extends, amazingly, to plots and houses in corporate towns) save only, under a short tenure: even that, is made liable to a forfeiture in favour of the first Protestant informer, should it exceed a certain profit, prescribed by the statute. The operation of this interdict in making spies ex-

tremely vigilant, brought many suits into our courts of law, and reduced many families to distress and sorrow. Yet this is but a slight inconvenience, compared to other consequences. It has put a stop to agriculture, and converted our Popish landholders, into a huge tribe of Graziers, like our *Scythian* ancestors. Pasturage is *one* defence *with them* against informers, and is their sole occupation ; for industry we cannot call it. Careful however, of the true interests of men reduced to the necessity of leading such a life ; they avoid improving, building, or inclosing, as well to draw as much as possible from an expiring tenure, as to prevent a temptation in Protestants, to take leases in reversion of the wastes they throw about themselves. Is this œconomy an advantage to *Ireland* ? No ; but it is a conspiracy, and a licensed conspiracy, against its prosperity. Again, as these Graziers have no interest in the culture of land, they expel the poor labourers into mountains, into towns, and into the neighbouring kingdom ; some to gain a livelihood by thieving at home, others by earning abroad, the rents of their plots and Potatoe-gardens, while the wives and children of the greater part, infest every quarter of the Island, in the shape of naked beggars. This is no exaggerated account, and I appeal to the knowledge of every country gentleman in the kingdom, for the general truth of what I assert ; I appeal also to mankind, whether this series of evils, equally disgraceful and injuri-

ous to the nation, should be tolerated, on the score of men, who turn their farms into wastes, and derive all their advantages from encreasing their flocks, and thinning the human race? Thro' this pastoral employment, population meets great impediments, and one year of famine demolishes almost all that nature could produce in many ; view here then, the unforeseen, but tragical means for preventing the growth of Popery : It is surely full time to put an end to such a calamity !

The tiller of the land, and the manufacturer, *are the two hinges*, on which the prosperity of this kingdom must turn : the one is the support of the other, and the credulity of a *future* age, will hardly extend to the belief, that any policy of the *present*, should make a separation between them. To restore agriculture, we should return to King *William's* principles and practice, by *encouragements to labour*, and *security to the labourer* : to minds enlarged by knowledge, and instructed by experience, this change of system will not be difficult, and no danger can follow, while Papists are kept disarmed *by law*, while (if we should credit themselves) they are disarmed *by conscience* ; while also, they are retained by *stable* interest, and (to complete our security) while we have legislation, and all the military, as well as civil power, of the kingdom in our hands.

For several years past, we live mostly on the bread imported hither from foreign regions. We even import Corn from *North-America* ; and we

suffer many of our people to transport themselves thither, and for ever, to cultivate it for us. Here then is another expedient, tho' not so effectual, as the returns of famine, *to prevent the growth of Popery*. For four years past, this importation of Corn, has cost us annually, on an average, better than 300,000 *l.* which added to more than a million a year to Absentees, and to other expenditures on articles of luxury or use, that we might either well want, or raise at home, has so far exceeded all our profits on commerce, that we must be absolutely undone, without the speedy interposition of the legislature.

Let the bread of foreign lands feed our manufacturers; you put the useful arts, and the most useful of all, the Linen-Manufacture, into the hands of a step-dame. In the arms of so unnatural a nurse, the child must be certainly stunted: and until you restore it to the true mother, it will not thrive: in three Provinces out of four, the richest in their soil, and the most convenient for foreign Markets, the Linen-Manufacture is still in its infancy: its progress is slow, and it will never arrive to any maturity, if you do not provide for its nurture *at home*. Whatever evil there may be in the growth of Popery, there can be none in the growth of useful artizans, or useful husbandmen; though the laws should punish them on a religious account, they may however be loyal, and have the greatest inducement to be so, from the lenity of the executive government,

since the succession of the present Royal Family took place. In fact, they are not molested in the exercise of their spiritual duties ; and this, doubtless, is good policy, as well as great clemency towards men, guilty of no civil crime to justify punishment. Let us speak (it is time to speak) on this subject as philosophers and politicians, not as Catechists, who believe as they are taught, and who prefer a pleasing impression, to a disagreeable conviction. Magna Charta itself, annual elections of our Representatives, and the great sanctions of the British constitution, were sought for, and obtained by our Popish ancestors. If they did not fight in the cause of liberty, and throw ramparts about it, we might be slaves, not freemen ; and an unweildy code of pains and penalties against such of their posterity in both kingdoms, as retained the religion *they* professed, seems to be a solecism in politics ; unless the latter give proofs in our own days, that they are averse to a still better civil constitution, than their ancestors contended for. The opposition given by Papists to the Revolution in its first progress, was natural ; on its becoming a *legal* establishment, the wiser part submitted : the rebellion of such as continued in opposition, was unjustifiable ; and they suffered by executions, and forfeitures. The present generation are not accountable for the treason of such men ; but follow the example of the wiser men I have mentioned ; they therefore merit some reward, especially in a nor-

thern country, where every great national advantage must be obtained from the hand of labour, and hardly any, without the activity of that instrument. Let it not therefore be tied up, because Papists rebelled here in times of a very different complection from the present. For evident it is, that under our present legal interdicts, agriculture cannot take place, and manufactures which should be grafted on *that stock*, will produce but little, most certainly, when grafted on *any other*. A good *Agrarian law* will execute itself; it is not in the nature of things, *that any other, discouraging to the tiller*, can be effectual. Let this capital truth be for once admitted: let it be granted also, that agriculture, or in other words, the business of planting, building, and enclosing, as well as of tilling, should be that of men, *secure from all danger in conducting it*; not of men exposed to great danger, *in attempting it*. Popery is, at present, an incapacity, and justly so, to employments civil and military; but it should be none, as I have mentioned above, to any other employment, productive of general prosperity, and, consequently, *of the Protestant interest*; much less should this Popery be suffered to remain an inanimate side in the body politic; *clogging the action, damping the spirit, and affecting the very being*, of the sound side, to which it is annexed.

By substituting imaginary to real danger, we often create, what should not otherwise exist. The danger of Popery, or rather of Papists, was

great formerly, when the Nation was divided into two parties, contending for power, and rendering their Religion subservient to their passions. It was great, from the claims of the old *Irish* to the estates they recently forfeited by Rebellion : it was great also, from the support of powerful princes on the Continent, to the claimants. All those dangers from Popery, have been long since extinguished ; and new dangers of another nature have succeeded ; to such dangers, arising from depopulation, and discouragements to industry, let us turn our attention. We can do so with success : we have leisure for it : we have power and legislation on our side : we have property secured by old possession, and old prescription : we are safe, where our great-grand-fathers had every thing to fear ; and therefore should suit our conduct, as they did theirs, to the nature of the danger which is most pressing ; to the activity of a *present* evil, not to the unlikely contingency of a *remote* one.

The danger of Popery to the Protestant interest, was great formerly, from the causes I have assigned. It is only great, at present, from the pastoral occupation of its votaries, from their connexion with us as fellow-citizens, from the insecurity of their possessions, *monied* or *landed*, from the miserable condition of the labouring people, and from the necessity of emigration among great numbers, to procure abroad, what is refused them at home. Such I say is our dan-

ger from Popery, and it is great. Legislative wisdom cannot put a slight upon it : and the remedy appears easy, on King *William's* Plan, without perpetuating an unequal combat, between *the penalties of law, and the penalties of conscience.*

Our penal laws, should on the same plan, be suited, as I said before, *to the reality and extent of the civil crime*, and this wise measure will be the more practicable, as the *civil crime* arising from *religious error*, can be easily detected. It is only putting the dissenting Religionist, *to the test of his civil orthodoxy*, and this for more than a hundred and fifty years past, has been the prosperous policy, established in *Holland*, in the electorate of *Hanover*, in that of *Brandenburg*, and throughout higher and lower *Saxony*.

These arguments, however unpopular, cannot be forborn, as they are highly favourable to the re-establishment of the true interests of this country, in its present exhausted state ; nor is this the time for cowardice in politics, or for concealing the conviction, or renouncing the advantages, of any important truth, for no better reason, but because it is odious to *unreflecting* men. To advance the Protestant interest, we should avail ourselves of every strength it may gain, *from whatever hand it comes* ; and to comprehend it, in its fullest extent, *we should strip it of all unrelative ideas.* The Protestant interest in a *political* sense (the only sense in which our present subject is concerned) consists in the *union* of the Protestant

powers of *Europe*, so as to form a strength sufficient to preponderate the Popish. In a *domestic* sense, it consists in giving the law to our Popish fellow-subjects, *in the manner, and on the terms*, most conducive to public utility. In a *party* sense, it must be considered in the nature of a conquest, which when completed, includes the security of the conquered, not their destruction ; the privation of every power *to do evil*, but of none *to do good*, to the community. The Protestant interest consists also, in confirming to religious dissenters, those civil privileges which annex them *to* the civil government ; not in loading them with restraints which separate them *from it*. The Protestant interest stated on *such* principles, must prosper ; *nor will it bear being established on any other*, but to its detriment ; in countries especially which depend upon commerce, and useful arts : it cannot, doubtless, be promoted by depressing a multitude of men, who should labour, and want nothing but encouragement to begin, and security to proceed.

I am well aware, that the scheme I have been recommending all this time, *on King William's plan* of policy, will be objected to ; as such a scheme would prolong the evils *Queen Anne's penal laws* were calculated to remedy—a continuance of Popery in this island, and a suspension of the happiness of becoming all *one Protestant people*. The reply to this objection is not difficult ; for it is obvious, that the extirpation of Po-

pery is not to be effected by those penal laws. The experience of seventy years since their promulgation proves it ; and as those laws failed of the *good* intended, the *evil* attending their constant operation should, as far as possible, be removed. On the other hand ; if this political scheme of King *William* is inadmissible, 'till an identity of worship takes place in this kingdom ; there can be but one *effectual* remedy in such a case ; the cutting off at once, those cumbersome branches which for seventy years past, have retarded the growth, and wasted the sap of the only trunk, from whence we must draw our political nutriment. However practicable such an amputation may be, it is not, certainly, in our present circumstances, eligible ; and if it be not, it were better to proceed on the model of our *Dutch Neighbours*, who have long since shaken off their captivity to temporary opinion, and adopted the permanent judgments of nature. They have sacrificed their local passions, and the strongest of all, their *aversions* and *resentments*, to natural advantages : and instead of cutting off those branches, *so hurtful to us*, they have by care and culture, brought them to bear *salutary fruit*. In truth, to proselyte Papists to our established church, by playing the pains and penalties of *this* life, against those of the *next*, is not the way to win the heart, or convince the understanding. It is, I own, a way successful enough, with the rich and luxurious, who have old Patri-

monies to preserve, and very little religion to lose. The pride of family, in such cases, is strong, and the worldly reward is great and immediate. Relatively to the industrious and inferior people, the more numerous and useful part of the community, such a scheme can never take place; because the human heart, *unprepared by religious indifference*, revolts against secular violence, active or negative: and, certainly, when we punish men of this middle station, for adhering to a mode of worship, which includes persecution *in the number of its beatitudes*, and outbids by future rewards the perishable gifts held forth by the present life, we put them exactly in the case of the poor traveller: the more the fury of the storm laid claim to his cloak, the faster was the hold he kept of it. Look over (in our registry office) the list of converts made from Popery, in the course of these last seventy years, and see what a mighty acquisition we have made! Were the number tenfold, yet what proportion would it bear to the number of Papists now living in several single towns, not to mention the whole island? and if the incentives to preserve antient patrimonies, have *compelled so few to come in*, thro' so long a period as seventy years; what prospect have we, that seventy times seventy, without more effectual means of conviction than punishment, will complete their conversion? Indeed, the hunger, the nakedness, the wretchedness of the poor, the decay of agriculture, and the quick returns of famine, may well supply the insufficiency of penal laws;

they are at present the *preventive of preventives*, against the growth of Popery: But as our humane legislators, must abhor its excision by such means, we can entertain no doubt, of their providing a speedy remedy against a calamity, which ultimately must involve the ruin of the whole nation, as well as that of individuals.

The distresses of this country, particularly for several years past, seem to have filled their measure. Like an electrical shock, they have pervaded the body of the people, from the inferior part, who felt the first stroke, to those who were the most distant from it. The great demand for our exports, and the consequential flow of money, during the last most successful war, blinded us; and the blindness continued. We could not see the ebb of this money-tide, on the conclusion of the peace, nor foresee the wretched artificial expedient of supporting our credit, by the circulation of paper-bills. Lands rose in their value to an unnatural height; they are now fallen, to the great detriment of the Protestant landlord, who increased his expences, in proportion to the nominal improvement of his rental; and to the great detriment of the protestant farmer, outbid by the Papist; who cannot support without some tenure in land, and who generally pursues his pastoral life, rather for bare *subsistence* than for *profit*. Such evils, surely, ought not to be left to themselves, for their cure. We know our distemper, both in kind and degree. We have seen its effects

thro' every stage ; and the remedy is easy from the present disposition of the legislature, from our present state of repose, from the soundness of our constitution, from the good intentions of the executive government, under the best of kings, from our natural advantages, and in fine, from the power of uniting the hearts and hands of all our people, to avail ourselves, of almost every earthly happiness, that God and nature intended for us.

About twenty years ago, some gentlemen of distinguished merit with the public, proposed to permit Papists to purchase our morasses and mountainous tracts ; as the conversion of those nuisances into profitable lands would adorn the face, as it would improve the rental, of our island. Thro' such a policy we could acquire *a great deal*, and lose *nothing* ; it was besides, an admirable scheme for employing our idle hands, and it would be a great additional strength to ourselves, to be turned immediately against the improvers of such wastes, should they hereafter prove guilty of treachery or infidelity to government : But as the attention of the legislature, was *at the time*, drawn another way, that scheme was suspended ; and we should wonder, that it was never since adopted, had not experience taught us, that the best things are often little regarded, or absolutely slighted, thro' the facility of obtaining them ; while those of doubtful operation, are but too often preferred. In one case, there is no field open for the display

of refinement ; in the other, the mind is put in motion by difficulty ; is heated by opposition, and seduced by its success in the choice between alternatives of uncertain benefit. From this constitution in the mental frame, much good has been omitted in this world, to say no worse. At present, we have reason to hope, that no advantage to this country will be overlooked, *because it lies at our feet* : That which I have just mentioned, and the INLAND NAVIGATION, are noble schemes for acquiring the activity and exerting the strength, of which King *William* laid the foundation. No objection lies against them, and they are practicable. Indeed the spirit of improvement has happily gone forth among us of late, beyond all former efforts. The DUBLIN SOCIETY led the example, and rendered itself celebrated throughout *Europe*, by encouraging useful arts, and rewarding the artists, without any distinction of religion or party. Many of its members have seats in parliament, and will excite in others, the spirit infused into themselves. Enlightened men, who love their country, know every danger to which it lies exposed ; every internal advantage it is capable of improving, and every injury which former misapprehensions have entailed upon us. In parliament, they will find men (many we hope) actuated by their own feelings, and endowed with the same elevation of mind. Their combined influence will be great, while their proceedings will, no doubt, be cautious. They will consider whe-

ther the present be the proper time for re-establishing the plan laid by K. *William* for the prosperity of this kingdom ; or whether the minds of the majority are prepared for it, by a nearer view of the consequences, which Q. *Anne's* penal laws have produced. The greater, and often honestest, part of mankind, are averse from resigning their first impressions of things : Be it truth or error, they are generally equally tenacious of the one and the other ; confirming by habit, but seldom trying by examination, what they take up fortuitously. Providence for wise purposes, has given the human mind, this turn ; as truth, its object, could never be obtained in a maze of scepticism. It is, however, reasonable to doubt in many cases : In political matters more especially, subject to a thousand accidents and fluctuations, a tenacity of opinion is, by no means, to be perpetuated, but varied as conjunctures and circumstances vary : A wise man attending to such variations, will hardly go astray ; and to gentlemen who may still hesitate on the question of the safety, rather than utility of King *William's* plan, or who may think that of Queen *Anne* less dangerous, I shall beg leave to submit to their consideration, the following queries from that great divine and philosopher, Dr. BERKLEY, the late bishop of *Cloyne*. They are only a few out of the many, published by him about forty years ago, for opening the minds of this nation, to its true and invariable interests. The principles which run

through these queries were my guide thro' the whole of the present work. They strengthen my argument all along, and should I be unfortunate in my manner of conducting it, I make the reader ample amends, by the following extracts from the * author himself.

QUERIES of the Bishop of CLOYNE.

1. Whether a scheme for the welfare of this kingdom should not take in the whole inhabitants ?

2. Whether it be not a vain attempt to project the flourishing of our Protestant gentry, exclusive of the bulk of the natives ?

3. Whether the great and general aim of the public, should not be, to employ the people ?

4. Whether there be any country in Christendom, more capable of improvement than *Ireland* ?

5. Whether in such a soil as ours, if there was industry, there could be want ?

6. Whether there be upon earth, any Christian or civilized people so beggarly, wretched, and destitute, as the common *Irish* ?

7. Whether, nevertheless, there is any other people, whose wants may be more easily supplied from home ?

* See tracts relating to Ireland, by Dr. *Berkley* bishop of *Cloyne*, republished by Mr. Faulkner, and to be found in his shop.

8. Whether the public happiness be not proposed by the legislature, and whether such happiness doth not contain, that of individuals?

9. Whether we should not cast about by all manner of means, to excite industry, and to remove whatever hinders it? and whether every one should not lend a helping hand?

10. Whether it be not a new spectacle under the sun, to behold in such a climate, and such a soil, and under such a gentle government, so many roads untrodden, fields untilled, houses desolate, and hands unemployed?

11. Whether there be any other nation possessed of so much good land, and so many able hands to work it, which yet is beholden for bread to foreign countries?

12. Whether national wants ought not to be the rule of trade? and whether the most pressing wants of the majority, ought not to be first considered?

13. Whether it is possible the country should be well improved, while our beef is exported, and our labourers live upon potatoes?

14. Whether the quantities of beef, butter, wool and leather exported from this island, can be reckoned the superfluities of a country, where there are so many natives naked, and famished?

15. Whether the way to make men industrious, be not, to let them taste the fruits of their industry? and whether the labouring ox should be muzzled?

16. Whether the public be more concerned in any thing, than the procreation of good citizens ?

17. Whether as industry increased, our manufactures would not flourish ? and as these flourished, whether better returns would not be made from estates to their landlords, both within and without the kingdom ?

18. Whether it is possible the state should not thrive, whereof the lower part were industrious, and the upper, wise ?

19. Whether we are not as far *before* other nations, with respect, to natural advantages, as we are *behind* them, with respect to arts and industry ?

20. Whether it would not be a poor and ill-judged project, to attempt to promote the good of the community, by invading the rights of one part thereof, or of one particular order of men ?

21. Whether there be not two general methods, whereby men become sharers in the national stock of wealth or power ; industry and inheritance ? and whether it would be wise in a civil society, to lessen that share which is allotted to merit and industry ?

22. Whether there be a more wretched, and at the same time a more unpitied case, than for men *to make precedents, for their own undoing* ?

23. Whether any art or manufacture be so difficult as the making good laws ?

24. Whether an oath testifying allegiance to the king, and disclaiming the pope's authority in

temporals, may not be justly required of the Roman-Catholics? and whether in common prudence or policy, any Priest should be tolerated, who refuseth to take it?

25. Whether there is any such thing as a body of inhabitants in any Roman Catholic country under the sun, that profess an absolute submission to the Pope's orders, in matters of an indifferent nature? or that in such points, do not think it their duty, to obey the civil government?

26. Whether there is any country in Christendom, either kingdom or republic, depending or independent, free or enslaved, which may not afford us an useful lesson?

26. Whether my countrymen are not readier at finding excuses, than remedies?

28. Whether there be any people who have more leisure to cultivate the arts of peace, and study the public weal?

29. Whether the wealth of a country will not bear proportion to the skill and industry of its inhabitants?

30. Whether it is not a great point to know what we wou'd be at? and whether whole states, as well as private persons, do not often fluctuate for want of this knowledge?

31. Whether that which *employs and exerts* the force of a community, *deserves not to be well considered, and well understood?*

32. Whether it be not a sad circumstance, to live among lazy beggars? and whether, on the

other hand, it would not be delightful to live in a country, swarming like *China*, with busy people?

33. Whether the main point be not to multiply and employ our people?

34. Whose fault is it, if *poor* Ireland, *still continues poor*?

Ireland is *poor indeed*, though this long repose of eighty years intitled it to a better fate : the causes of this shameful poverty do not lie deep. They float upon the surface, and every party-interest (if any such exists) nay, every *personal* interest from the great land proprietor, to the cottager, is concerned in their removal. If such causes have been hitherto overlooked thro' inattention, or perhaps seen but partially, thro' reluctance to quit a profile view of things ; now is the time for looking them full in the face, and of tracing back effects to their true fountains. Let the maxims which run through the above queries (from as great a man as this or the last age produced) stand before us as mirrors, to reflect realities ; (our *common indivisible interests* :) and let us lay aside those false glasses, which only represent the fears of *superstitious policy*, or the aversions of *ill-grounded prejudice*. I have endeavoured, for the good of my country, to explain a few only of those causes, which have reduced it to its present exhausted state ; and under the shelter of such authorities, as those of a *Berkley*, a *Swift*, a *Montesquieu*, a *Hume* ; I run no hazard of injuring truth, except by my manner of conveying it.

No detached observations from such men can be so profitable, as the perusal of the whole series of argument, in their own works. Therein we learn, “ that in all free countries, the laws ought to be “ framed on the *spirit*, as the government ought “ to be administered on the *principle* of the constitution.” “ That in cases, where no legal distinction is made, between *real* and *problematical* “ guilt, *public weakness*, must bear an exact proportion, to the innoxious *numbers weakened*.” “ That countries which stand in need of industry “ require a mild and moderate government.” and that, “ Perpetuity of servitude, is contrary to the “ nature of things in all free states.” Let such considerations, with many more from the same oracles, have their due weight, and engage us to reflect, whether the prospect of our *danger* from Papists be in any degree commensurate, with the prospect of our *security*? This question should startle no man. Our *security* must arise from their co-operation, and from their having an interest in co-operating: Our *danger* from their inability to add to the common stock of public prosperity, and from their exclusion from the stable prosperity in the land of their birth. It should be considered also, Whether we have not persisted too long in measures, which however excusable in our ancestors, are doubtless, at this distance of time, no lines for us to be guided by? and, Whether any political scheme, opposed to the hearty co-operation of half our people, can ever bring us to that

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summit of happiness which our climate, our soil, and civil constitution intitle us to? And lastly, Whether it be possible, in the nature of things, that our penal laws against this people, can produce any other consequences for the time to come, than those they have constantly produced for seventy years past—misery to individuals; weakness to the public?

Let the voice of nature and experience be listened to: let men who were the organs *of both*, be attended to. * SWIFT who knew the interests of his native country well, and studied them long, assures us from his own intimate knowledge of the inhabitants of this isle, that the Papists, had as little *the inclination*, as they had *the power*, to attempt any active injury, against the present establishment: But that great genius shared the fate of other prophets, sent to notify impending evil. He was *not* listened to in his day. We the posterity, however, ought to avail ourselves of his predictions, lest the judgment we feel, should fall heavier upon us. Let us improve the dispositions of the children of those Papists he described, into an ability of being *useful*, not *inactive*, in the service of their country.

No Protestant nation on earth is more secure from any domestic danger than this, unless we create it, thro' mistakes, of which common men would be ashamed in the ordinary occurrences of

* See Swift's works 8vo. Faulkner's Edit. vol. 4. p. 367. and vol. 6. p. 110, 111.

life ; or thro' groundless fears, that unhappy malady, for which we hope this great length of time, *has provided a specific*. We form a part of a mighty empire, and as we live nearest the seat of it, we are, in consequence, the most secure from any danger foreign or domestic, and likely from causes well known, to be the most favoured by a further extension of our commerce and manufactures : Let us not lose the benefit of this situation, by an exclusion of half our people, from a *subordinate share* in our *natural* advantages. Let us rather rouse them by encouragement, and take hostages of their fidelity, through the medium of security : means of all others the *most powerful*, and the *most effectual*. We are not (and let us thank Providence) in the case of a poor unguarded state, fearful of a *wooden-horse* from *without*, and equally so, of fellow-citizens *from within*, to open our gates for him. We are safe, where our ancestors were in danger ; and their remedy from a change of circumstances, is become our disease. View the policy of the *Dutch* commonwealth : surrounded by a thousand dangers from which we are exempt ; they made their Popish subjects their friends ; a part of their *barrier*, not against Popes (for Popes are no longer dangerous) but against mighty Popish neighbours at their doors. Their penal laws against those dissenting subjects, are mild and precise : they are brief also, and might be comprized within the compass of a sheet of paper, instead of being swollen into so huge a

code of *clauses*, *prohibitions*, *comminations*, *amerce-ments*, and *interdicts*, as embarrass the ablest lawyers in discovering the true construction ; and subject the unfortunate objects, of our own penal laws in particular, to such uncertainties, as very often to have no assurance, whether they are legally *innocent* or *criminal*, in many of their ordinary dealings between man and man ! We surely have more reason than the States of *Holland*, to reduce the penalties against Papists into ONE act, of no great extent of pages. And we may be induced to adopt so wise a step the sooner, as most of the British Colonies in *North-America*, increase their numbers and consequence every day, on this *Dutch plan*. From the extremities of the empire, they invite Irish Papists to a settlement among them, and they could never make any acquisition of the kind, had they not granted our emigrants, the security denied them at home. Those Colonies succeed also, (on the principle of setting up manufactories) in carrying off numbers of our poorer Protestant manufacturers, who, indeed, cannot hold out, against the dearth of provisions in this country, where they should be, and might be, cheaper than *in any other in Europe*. “ Shall such a mighty evil be tolerated ? shall “ the remedy well known, and within our reach, “ be neglected ? and shall we suspend the power “ of mending our affairs, to exert a power, fa- “ vourable only to other nations to whom we “ owe no favour ? ” Certain it is, that the spirit

of emigration is never produced in any country, without great pangs, and struggles, before it becomes prevalent. It never did, never will, proceed from a spirit of wantonness ; and to make it take effect, you must depress your people by poverty, and wants of every kind. More improvements have been made in *North-America*, within these ninety years, than in *Ireland*, in the course of five hundred ; and it should excite shame, as it must one day provoke indignation, to reflect, that so fine an Island as this, should become a nursery of labourers and manufacturers for that thriving Continent, as well as for other more contiguous countries : we want them at home : they will labour against us abroad.

No more need be said on this affecting subject. Our state bark is not now (as in former time) tossed in a storm, to justify throwing any of our goods over-board : but to be daily emptying it, *in a calm*, is such a strain of policy, as would astonish us, had we not instances of the like infatuation in modern times, and in other *European* countries.

T H E E N D.









